

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE
NASHVILLE DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

v.

LAURA BETH BLANKENSHIP,

Defendant.

Case No. 3:17-mj-4008

Magistrate Judge Newbern

ORDER

The United States has asked the Court to (1) order that a psychiatric or psychological report be filed with the Court pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 4241(b) and (2) set a hearing to determine Defendant Laura Blankenship's competency to stand trial as provided by 18 U.S.C. § 4241(a). (Doc. No. 13.) Defendant Blankenship has not filed a response in opposition to this motion. Accordingly, the Government's motion is **GRANTED**.

The Court "shall grant [a] motion" for a competency evaluation "if there is reasonable cause to believe that the defendant may presently be suffering from a mental disease or defect rendering [her] mentally incompetent to the extent that [she] is unable to understand the nature and consequences of the proceedings against [her] and to assist properly in [her] defense." 18 U.S.C. § 4241(a). Based upon testimony and evidence provided during Defendant's preliminary and detention hearings, the Court finds that such reasonable cause exists. (Doc. Nos. 16, 29.) Accordingly, the Court **ORDERS** that a competency evaluation and report be completed and prepared by Dr. Kimberly P. Brown, Associate Professor of Clinical Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and Director of the Vanderbilt Forensic Evaluation Team, in compliance with 18 U.S.C.

§ 4247(c). This evaluation may take place at a time and date that is convenient to Dr. Brown and to the parties no later than **April 28, 2017**.

Upon completion of the examination, the report shall be filed with the Court, with copies provided to counsel for Defendant and the Government, 18 U.S.C. § 4247(c), after which a competency hearing shall be scheduled as appropriate.

It is so **ORDERED**.


ALISTAIR E. NEWBERN
United States Magistrate Judge